

**The Russian Language.**

The Russian tongue is almost insurmountable to a foreigner, and to master it, sufficiently for literary purposes, would be in itself, for such a person, the labor of a life.—Excepting the Chinese, there is, perhaps, no language in the world fraught with so many difficulties. In the first place, the Russian alphabet possesses nine more letters than the English, and is made up of the Greek, Roman, and Slavonic characters. In 1666 the first Russian book was printed at Amsterdam, and it was about the year 1704 or 1705 that Peter the Great himself made many alterations in the old Slavonic letters, for the purpose of assimilating them more nearly to the Latin ones; and the first Russian journal was printed with this type at St. Petersburg in 1705, four years after the foundation of that city, from a font which had been cast for him by artists brought from Holland.

In the old Slavonic alphabet there are forty-six letters, but the modern Russian language comprises only thirty-five. In all matters, however, of a theological nature, the antique form is even now retained, and this constitutes the difference between the Czerkovnoi and Grashdanskoi, or the civil and church alphabet. This in a great measure must explain the difficulties which a foreigner would have to contend with, in attempting to render himself master of the Russian language; but if it were possible for him to do so perfectly, he would discover an extraordinary copiousness, a delicacy and beauty of expression, that would indeed surprise him.

In common with all dialects of Slavonic origin, the Russian is also remarkable for its euphony and versatility. It also embraces not only the sounds of every known language, but every guttural lisp and slur of which the human voice is capable. But the language is also divided into three leading dialects. The first is the Russian proper, or the language spoken in the two capitals, Moscow and St. Petersburg, and throughout the northern and central portion of the empire. It is the literary language of the Russians. Secondly, in the southern and southeastern provinces the Malo Russian is spoken, which dialect is supposed to approach nearer to the old Slavonic than any of the others; the idiom of Red Russia, in the northern and eastern districts of Hungary, and to the eastward of Gallacia, inhabited by the Russiacks, is almost identical with the Malo Russian. Thirdly, in Lithuania and Volhynia, and other portions of White Russia, the people speak the White Russia dialect. The geographical position of these districts should fully account for the Polish words and idioms which are here to be found. This is the youngest of the Russian dialects—although the first translation of the Holy Scriptures was made in it, it is also the farthest removed of the three from the old Slavonic.

Rumors may go abroad that cholera is prevailing in this city. Two cases have occurred under the following circumstances: On Tuesday last Mr. William H. Hall, one of the victims of the disease, started from Dubuque, Iowa, with two ladies from a Hotel where the cholera was prevailing. On arriving at Chicago, he despatched one of them to Detroit, and the other was so nervous and excited with fear, that he sent her on to his residence in Toledo, in advance of himself. Mr. Hall came on in a subsequent train, and soon after his arrival, the affrighted girl was attacked and died of cholera on Thursday. On Saturday Mr. Hall himself was attacked at about 1 o'clock, and died at 10 o'clock P. M.

For about four weeks Mr. Hall had been undergoing fatigue, and often deprived of rest. He had been to Virginia and to Iowa, and arrived at home on Wednesday last literally worn out with mental and physical exhaustion.

It thus appears that so far as these cases are concerned, and we know of no others, the disease was incurred and germinated elsewhere, that the victims were peculiarly susceptible to its attacks, and that literally they only came home to die, leaving a startling and melancholy impression upon their friends and the community.—[Toledo Blade.

**Foreign Wars of Great Britain.**

We have prepared for the Herald the statement below, which will doubtless interest our readers at this time. Besides the numerous wars between England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, Great Britain has been engaged in the following wars with foreign nations:

		Duration of war.	
War with	Year.	Year.	Yrs.
France, 1116	Peace 1118	2	
" " 1161	" 1186	25	
" " 1194	" 1195	1	
" " 1201	" 1216	15	
" " 1224	" 1234	10	
" " 1294	" 1299	5	
" " 1339	" 1360	21	
" " 1368	" 1420	52	
" " 1422	" 1471	49	
" " 1492	" 1493	1	
" " 1512	" 1514	2	
" " 1522	" 1527	5	
" " 1549	" 1550	1	
" " 1557	" 1559	2	
" " 1562	" 1564	2	
" " Spain, 1588	" 1604	16	
" " 1624	" 1629	5	
" " France, 1627	" 1629	2	
" " Holland, 1651	" 1654	3	
" " Spain, 1655	" 1660	5	
" " France, 1666	" 1668	2	
" " Denmark, 1666	" 1668	2	
" " Holland, 1666	" 1668	2	
" " Algiers, 1669	" 1671	2	
" " Holland, 1672	" 1674	2	
" " France, 1689	" 1697	8	

The general treaty of peace of Ryswick, between England, Germany, Holland and Spain on the one part, and France on the other, was signed by the ministers of these powers at the palace of Ryswick, near the Hague, in Holland, Sept. 20, 1697. It concluded this last war. The event is commemorated by a pyramidal monument at that place.

The great modern and extensive wars of Great Britain, have been as follows:

War of the succession with France, Spain, &c., commenced in May, 1702, and closed in March, 1713, by the peace of Utrecht; duration, 11 years. The most important stipulations in this treaty were, the security of the Protestant succession in England, the disuniting the French and Spanish crowns, and the enlargement of the British colonies in America.

War with Spain, December, 1718, to the peace of 1721; duration of war, over two years.

War with Spain, October, 1739, to the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, April 31, 1748; duration of war, eight years and six months.

War with France, March, 1744, closed also by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, April 30, 1748; duration of war, over four years.

The seven years war with France, lasted from June 9, 1756, to the peace of Paris, Feb. 10, 1763. By this war Great Britain acquired Canada and other French colonies.

War with Spain, January, 1762, closed by the general peace of February 10th, 1763.

War with the United States, from April, 1775, to the peace of Paris, November 30th, 1782. Duration of war, nearly eight years.

War with France, Feb. 6, 1778. Peace of Paris, Jan. 20, 1783. Duration of war, about five years.

War with Spain, April 17, 1780. Closed by treaty of Paris, June 20, 1783. Duration of war, about three years.

War with Holland, December 21, 1780. Treaty of peace signed September 2, 1783. Duration of war, over two years.

It will be observed that during the latter part of the American revolutionary war, which was closed by the treaty of Paris, England was at war with America, France, Spain and Holland.

War with France during the French revolution, from February 1, 1793, to the peace of Amiens, March 27, 1802. Duration of the war, nine years.

War with France and her allies, under Napoleon Bonaparte, from April 2d, 1803, to the treaty of Paris in 1814, eleven years.

War against Napoleon on his return from Elba, in March, 1825, finally closed by the battle of Waterloo, June 18, 1815.

War with the United States, from June 18, 1812, to the treaty of Ghent, December 24,

1814. Duration of war, two years and six months.

In the war against Napoleon, the great powers of Europe leagued sometimes with, and sometimes against Great Britain. Russia leagued with France and Austria at the peace of Tilsit, in July, 1807, against Great Britain, but that league only lasted about five years, and there was no conflict between the arms of England and Russia. They became allies again in 1812.

England spent 65 years in war, and 62 in peace, previous to the close of the war with France in 1815, since when the general peace has lasted 39 years, nearly. In the war of 1688, England spent 35,000,000; in the war of the Spanish succession, 62,000,000; in the Spanish war, 54,000,000; in the seven years war, 112,000,000; in the American revolutionary war, 136,000,000; in the war of the French revolution, 464,000,000; and in the war against Napoleon, 1,159,000,000, thus making a total expenditure for war, in 127 years, (from the English revolution in 1689, to the downfall of Napoleon in 1815,) of 2,023,000,000 pounds sterling. M. d'Pratt estimates the loss of life by the French forces in the six campaigns of the Peninsular war, (Spain and Portugal) at 600,000 men. The loss sustained by the Spaniards and their allies was probably as great, making the total destruction of human beings in the Peninsular war alone, about 1,200,000.

The British conquests in India commenced in 1757, and continued at various times down to the annexation of the Punjab or country of the Sikhs to the British crown, in March, 1849. The war with China commenced in 1840, and continued to the peace of August 29, 1842, when a treaty was signed on board the Cornwallis ship of war, by the British and Chinese commissioners.

Certainly two of the most singular histories on record are those of the grandmothers of Louis Napoleon and the present sultan of Turkey, Abdul Medjid. These two worthies, the emperor and the sultan, are grandsons of American Creole girls! As this seems incredible, their history will not prove uninteresting. We give it on the authority of the Pittsburg Post. These two Creole girls, grandmothers, Josephine de Tascher and a Miss S., were born and raised in the lovely West India isle of Martinique. They were of French origin—their fathers being planters and near neighbors. At the death of her father, Josephine went to France, and was married to M. de Beauharnais, by whom she had one son, Eugene, and a daughter, Hortense. Some time after the death of Beauharnais, Josephine was married to Napoleon Bonaparte, and became empress of France. Her daughter, Hortense, was married to Joseph Bonaparte, then king of Holland; and the present emperor of France is her son by that marriage. The history of Miss S. is more wildly romantic and singular. This lady quitted the island of Martinique some time before her friend. The vessel carrying her to France, was attacked and taken by the Algerine corsairs, and the crew and passengers made prisoners. But this corsair ship was, in turn, attacked and pillaged by Tunis pirates, and Miss S. was carried by them to Constantinople, and offered for sale as a slave. Her extraordinary beauty and accomplishments found her a purchaser in the sultan himself; and she soon became the chief lady of the seraglio and sultana of Turkey. Mahmoud II. was her son; and the present sultan, Abdul Medjid, is the son of Mahmoud. What a history! Can its parallel be found in any true record? The sultana died in 1811, the empress Josephine in 1814. Their grandsons now rule over two wide and powerful empires, and are entering as friends and allies upon one of the most momentous and sanguinary struggles in which Europe was ever engaged. How little could it be guessed by those two lovely Creole girls that their early friendships were to result thus!

It is said that many of the relatives of this sultana left the island of Martinique and settled at Constantinople, where their descendants still reside, and enjoy the favor of the sultan. Those whom Josephine elevated to power are almost numberless, and to this day their influence almost guides the destinies of France.—[San. Register.

**A New Invention—Gas for Country Use.**

By a new invention, people living in towns where no coal gas is or can be profitably formed, may still obtain the luxury of a brilliant home-made gas light, at a cost cheaper than that of the ordinary oil or fluid. We witnessed this important improvement in complete operation, a few evenings since, at the residence of a well known literary and scientific gentleman on Spring Hill, Somerville—being the first house into which it had been introduced in this section of the country. The light produced is superior to that of coal gas, being clearer and more powerful, as the flame is of fuller volume, and burns with greater steadiness, while the expense is about the same as coal gas, at \$2.50 per thousand feet. It is the combustion of benzole, a resinous liquid, sold at \$1.50 per gallon, mixed with atmospheric air—the gas being generated by an ingenious and not inelegant apparatus, which may stand in the house entry-way, or even be placed on a closet shelf, and from which common gas fixtures may extend in all directions, and give the light in any or every room at pleasure. The apparatus generates no more gas than is immediately consumed, and requires for the purpose only the heat of one of the burners used as a light—so that the whole cost of the gas is that of the apparatus and the benzole.

An apparatus of sufficient capacity for a good sized dwelling house is offered for \$150. It is so constructed that by means of a rotating air pump, which is revolved by a cord and a weight wound up by a crank, a stream of air is forced into the generator, which is partially filled with benzole. The generator contains a vaporator exposing a large surface of benzole to the action of the air as the latter is forced through both apartments by the pump and weight—and the thus evaporated benzole combining with the air produces a gas of the highest quality for illumination. The apparatus is so perfectly simple, safe, and durable, that it may be managed by the dullest domestic, only requiring the weight to be wound up before use, and the generator to be filled twice a month, or not as often, as the lights are employed.

This beautiful invention was patented in August last by Mr. O. P. Drake, a practical electrician of Boston, and must be regarded as one of the most utilitarian improvements of the times. It is applicable to houses, shops, hotels, factories or other places in the country, or even on ship-board. Hereafter the dwellers on the remotest hill-tops, or in the deepest shades of the "backwoods," may enjoy as much as those of the cities in the way of artificial "enlightenment" in their domestic arrangements.—[Boston Transcript.

**RENOVATING OLD GRAPE-VINES.**—The best mode of renovating an old grape-vine, is to make bare its roots for several feet around its stem—remove the ground entirely, and then apply two or three bushels of bones, which should always be preserved about a place for this purpose, partially broken up; and on the top of these add from one to two bushels of wood ashes, according to the size of the hole to be filled, mixed with some hog manure and rich soil. In one year, should this plan be pursued, a marked change for the better would be produced.

In pruning an old grape-vine which has been allowed for years to take its own course, it should not be topped too short the first year. About 12 or 15 feet, according to size, should be left to remain; the lateral branches should be thinned out to one or two feet apart, and at that distance tied to the trellis firmly. The fruit bearing twigs found upon these, should be pruned down so as to allow about three buds to each.—And the work is done.

The best time to prune is at any period before the sap begins to circulate—say in January, February and the first half of March.

No external application to the branches will help their productiveness. Soap-suds applied to the roots plentifully, on washing-days are of great advantage.—[Germantown Telegraph.